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COUNTY BOROUGH OF BIRKENHEAD



ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
FOR
1956

J. W. Lobban. M.A., M.D., D.P.H.

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COUNTY BOROUGH OF BIRKENHEAD

HEALTH COMMITTEE

**His Worship The Mayor
(COUNCILLOR W. C. BAKER, J.P.)**

**Chairman:
COUNCILLOR W. GARDNER**

**Deputy Chairman:
ALDERMAN H. D. SHAKESHAFT**

**Aldermen:
J. MILLER
H. PLATT, J.P.
(Ex-officio Chairman of General Purposes Committee)**

Councillors:

B. ALLEN (appointed 25/7/56)	MRS. D. MELVILLE, J.P.
MRS. L. BAKER	J. OATES (Ex-officio Chairman
MRS. A. L. CROMBLEHOLME	of Finance Committee)
A. N. DEAN	DR. R. W. L. PEARSON
S. V. GALLARD	MRS. C. PHILLIPS
MRS. F. GARDNER	R. PILKINGTON
MISS B. JACKSON	G. C. ROBERTS
E. B. JONES (resigned 29/6/56)	MRS. E. WARD

Non-Council Members:

MRS. A. CAPPER	MRS. P. ROBERTS
D. A. FLETCHER (appointed 5/12/56)	MISS E. THOMPSON
MRS. M. MUIR	MRS. E. VENABLES

INDEX

Administrative Staff	v.
Air Pollution	13, 38
Ambulance Service	25, 26, 27
Animal Feeding Meat—	
Registrations	50
Ante-natal Clinics	15
Area of Borough.....	1
Barbers and Hairdressers	40
B.C.G. Vaccination	28, 29
Beckwith St. Clearance Area...	36
Birkenhead Maternity	
Hospital	21
Birkenhead Mothers' Welfare	
Clinic	19
Births	1
Birth Rates	1
Blindness—Incidence of	13
British Empire Cancer	
Campaign.....	13
Brook St. Clearance Area	36
Caravans	39
Care and After-care	
Committee	27
Care of Mothers and	
Young Children	15
Clearance Areas	36, 37
Common Lodging Houses.....	37
Convalescent treatment	19
Coroners' (Amendment) Act	
1936	2
Coroner's inquests	2
Cremation	13
Day Nurseries	18
Deaths	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
Death Rates.....	2, 3, 4, 5
" Main causes	5, 6, 7
Dental care	18
Diphtheria	5, 6, 8
Immunisation	23, 24
Diseases of Animals Acts	49
Disinfection	39
Domestic Help Service	30
Dwelling houses, inspection	
and repair.....	34
Dwelling houses unfit for	
human habitation	35
Dysentery	7, 8
Epileptics	15
Estimated population.....	1
Export of Meat Products	50
Factories Acts—	
Action under	40, 41
Food Complaints	47
Food & Drugs Act—	
Examination and Analysis...43, 46	
Legal proceedings	47
Food Hygiene	10, 44, 45
" Poisoning	9, 10, 44
" Unsound	46, 47
Food premises, inspection of	
44, 45	
Food Stuffs in shops,	
inspection	46, 47
Gas and Air Analgesia	21
General Rate	1
General Statistics	1
Guardianship, Mental	
Deficiency.....	33
Hairdressers	40
Health Committee	ii
Health Visiting	21, 28
Home Nursing.....	22, 23
Housing and Environmental	
Hygiene	34
Houses, number of	1
" inspection and repair	34
" legal proceedings	35
" unfit for human	
" habitation	35
" work in default of	
" owners	35
Housing Repairs and Rents	
Act, 1954	37
Ice cream	43
Illegitimate births	1
Illegitimacy and mortality	1
Immunisation—Diphtheria	23, 24
" Whooping Cough	23, 25
Infant mortality	2, 3, 4,
Infant Welfare Clinics	16, 17
Infectious Diseases	5, 7, 8, 9
Influenza	6
Inquests	2
Introductory Letter.....	vi
Live Births	1
Lunacy and Mental Treatment	
Acts, 1890-1930	31
Market St. Clearance Area	36
Maternity and Child Welfare	15
Maternal Mortality.....	4, 19
Measles.....	5, 6, 7, 8
Meat Inspection	47, 48, 49, 50
Medical Examinations	13
Mental Deficiency Acts,	
1930/38	32, 33
Mental Health Services	
30, 31, 32, 33	
Midwives' Service	19, 20, 21
Milk Supply	41, 42
" examination	42
Mortality, Infant	2, 3, 4
National Assistance Act.....	33
National Health Service Act,	
1946, Schemes	15/33
Notification of Births	1
Notification of Infectious	
Diseases	7, 8, 9, 10, 12
Nurseries and Child Minders	
Regulation Act, 1948	18
Nursing Homes Registration	19

INDEX (*Continued*)

Occupation Centre (M.D.) ...	33	Superannuation examinations	13
Occupational Therapy	28	Statistics, general	1
Offensive Trades	40	Statistical Tables—	
Ophthalmia Neonatorum ...	9, 15, 21	Blind and Partially Sighted Persons	14
Penny rate—product of	1	Causes of death at different periods of life	6, 7
Persons per acre	1	Day Nursery attendances ...	18
Pests—extermination	38	Death rate per 1000	2, 5
Pet Animals Act, 1951	50	Dental Care	18
Pharmacy and Poisons Act, 1933	39	Factories Act, 1937/48	40, 41
Pig-keeping	39	Food Poisoning	10
Pneumonia	5, 6, 9	Housing—	
Poliomyelitis	5, 6, 7, 8	Certificates of Disrepair...	37
Vaccination	25	Defects remedied.....	34, 35
Population	1	Immunisation—1933/1956 ...	24
Premature Infants	19	Infectious Diseases	8, 9
Prevention of illness, care and after-care	27, 28, 29	Infant Clinic attendances ...	17
Public Health (Meat) Regulations, 1924	48, 49	Ophthalmia Neonatorum 9, 15, 21	
Queensbury St. Clearance Area	36	Meat Inspection—	
Rag Flock, etc., Act, 1951.....	39, 40	Animals slaughtered	47
Rateable value.....	1	Tuberculosis.....	11
Rats, mice, extermination of...	38	Tuberculosis contacts...	28, 29
Rehabilitation	28	Tuberculosis primary	
Road Traffic Acts, examinations	13	notifications	12
Roberts St. Clearance Area ...	36	Vital statistics	1
St. Anne St. Clearance Area ...	36	Theatres, Music Halls and Cinemas	39
St. Elizabeth's Convent	19	Toddlers' Clinics	18
Scarlet Fever	7, 8	Tuberculosis, notifications	10, 11, 12
School Kitchens	44	Uncertified deaths	2
" Meals Staff	13	Unmarried mothers, care of ...	19
" Milk—complaints	47	Un-notified births	2
Shops Act, 1950	46	Unsound food	46, 47
Slaughter of Animals Acts, 1933-1954	49	Vaccination Scheme	23, 24, 25
Slum Clearance Areas	36, 37	Vine St. Clearance Area	36
Smallpox vaccinations	25	Vital Statistics	1
Smoke Abatement	13, 38	Voluntary Agencies	19
Spastics	15	Water Supply	33
Staff	(v)	Welfare Foods	19
Still Births	1	Whooping Cough	5, 6, 7, 8
		" " Immunisation	23, 25

STAFF

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH:

J. W. LOBBAN, M.A., M.D., D.P.H.

SENIOR ASSISTANT MEDICAL OFFICER:

ANNA M. WILLIAMS, M.B., CH.B., D.P.H.

ASSISTANT MEDICAL OFFICERS:

Lillie L. Munro, M.B., CH.B., D.P.H.
John S. Seaton, L.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., L.R.F.P.S.
A. H. Wilde, M.B., CH.B., D.P.H.

VETERINARY OFFICER:

N. M. Clayton, M.R.C.V.S.

CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR AND INSPECTOR UNDER FOOD AND DRUGS ACTS:

M. Holgate, A.R.SAN.I.

SUPERINTENDENT HEALTH VISITOR:

Miss E. Ramage, S.R.N., S.C.M., H.V.C. (Retired January 1956)
Miss C. M. Jones, S.R.N., S.C.M., H.V.C. (As from 1/3/56)

LAY ADMINSTRATIVE OFFICER:

W. M. Cavers (Retired June 1956)
J. H. H. Shell, D.P.A. (As from July 1956)

To the Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors of the
County Borough of Birkenhead.

Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Health of the Borough in 1956 is the subject of this Annual Report. As you will see from the body of the report the year has been a satisfactory one on the whole.

In an endeavour to meet the demands for qualified Public Health Inspectors two pupil inspectors were appointed during the year.

Difficulties have been experienced in filling vacant posts of Health Visitors. These difficulties will increase owing to the impending retiral of members of the staff. It is hoped that a scheme for the appointment and training of pupil Health Visitors will be in operation in 1957.

During 1956 the Health Department bade farewell to two of its long service members. In January 1956 Miss Ramage, Superintendent Health Visitor, retired after service with the Corporation since 1928. Her work was appreciated by Members of the Council, the Health Department and the General Public. I am glad of this opportunity to add my good wishes for her retiral to those of your Committee which have been minuted.

In June 1956, Mr. W. M. Cavers retired from the post of Lay Administrative Officer. He joined the staff of the Town Clerk in 1912 and was transferred to the Health Department in 1930 as Chief Clerk, subsequently being appointed Lay Adminstrative Officer. The knowledge and experience gained from this long service in Local Government were of invaluable help to the three Medical Officers of Health he served so loyally. I feel I can speak for all three when I pay tribute to such a loyal servant of the Corporation. You as a Committee have minuted your appreciation of Mr. Cavers' services and I know he has the good wishes of everyone for his retiral.

The staff of the Health Department continues to give loyal and conscientious service and this together with the co-operation of Chief Officers and Heads of Departments makes for pleasant and harmonious working. I am glad of this opportunity of mentioning this.

Finally the interest and encouragement shown by the Chairman, Deputy Chairman and every member of the Health Committee is a stimulus and indeed a challenge to the Department to give of its best.

I am,

Your obedient servant,

J. W. LOBBAN,
Medical Officer of Health.

9 Hamilton Square,
Birkenhead.

GENERAL STATISTICS

Area of Borough	8.598 acres or 13.4 square miles
Estimated population (mid. 1956)	141,600
Density of population	16.4 persons per acre
Number of houses in the Borough (at 1/4/56)	37247
Estimated product of a penny rate	£6045
General Rate	16/3d. in the £

POPULATION, BIRTHS AND DEATHS

Population.—The estimated mid-year 1956 population was 141,600. The population, as recorded in the census of 1951, was 142,392 (68,412 males and 73,980 females).

Births.—There were 2,479 live births allocated to the Borough; the corresponding birth rate being 16.9 per 1,000 population compared with the National figure of 15.7.

The Birth Rates of the last 10 years are as follows:—

	Rate per 1,000 population					
1947	24.8
1948	21.4
1949	19.8
1950	18.5
1951	18.2
1952	18.2
1953	18.4
1954	17.7
1955	16.7
1956	16.9

Sex Distribution.—1,251 boys and 1,228 girls were born during the year.

Legitimacy.—111 illegitimate births occurred, giving a percentage of 4.4.

Still Births.—72 still births were registered. This represents a still birth rate of 0.5 per 1,000 population, or 28.2 per 1,000 births. The corresponding figure for England and Wales is 23.0 per 1,000 total births. Two of the still births were illegitimate.

Births notified during the year.—Under Section 203 of the Public Health Act, 1936, 2,490 births were notified. Of these 67 were still births. Many of the births notified from hospitals were outward transfers to other areas.

Births in Hospitals:

Birkenhead Maternity Hospital ...	...	593	(9 still-births)
St. Catherine's Hospital ...	...	1,041	(46 ,,)
Births in Nursing Homes ...	...	43	(1 ,,)

Other births:

Notified by doctors	...	...	2	(— ,,)
Notified by midwives	...	...	810	(11 ,,)
Notified by parents	...	...	1	(— ,,)

Un-notified births.—The Registrars reported 5 births which were not notified (by doctors or midwives).

DEATHS

Deaths.—1,753 deaths occurred during the year, representing a death rate of 12.8 per 1,000 population. The comparable figure for England and Wales was 11.7 per 1,000 population. The Death Rates for recent years are as follows:—

	Rates per 1,000 population					
1947	14.3
1948	12.1
1949	12.3
1950	12.4
1951	14.2
1952	12.6
1953	11.8
1954	12.7
1955	13.3
1956	12.8

Sex Distribution of Deaths.—885 males and 868 females died during the year.

Uncertified Deaths.—None.

Coroners' Inquests.—Inquests were held on 90 (5.2 per cent of the total deaths).

The Coroners (Amendment) Act, 1936.—During the year, 159 deaths were registered following post mortem without an inquest. This represents 9.1 per cent of total deaths.

Infant Mortality.—Infant Mortality Rates of recent years are as follows:—

			Rate per 1,000 live births	
			Birkenhead	England & Wales
1947	...	...	72	41
1948	...	...	53	34
1949	...	...	39	32
1950	...	...	42	30
1951	...	...	40.5	30
1952	...	...	34.7	27.6
1953	...	...	28.4	26.8
1954	...	...	28.5	25.5
1955	...	...	27.9	24.9
1956	...	...	33.4	23.8

It is disappointing to record that the infant mortality rate has increased from 27.9 to 33.4 per 1,000 live births (the corresponding National figure is 23.8). Actually, 83 children up to one year of age died as compared with 68 in 1955; 71 of the 83 deaths occurred in hospital.

The neonatal deaths (within four weeks of birth) numbered 59 or 71% of the total deaths under 1 year.

The cause of death in the 59 neonatal deaths was as follows:—

Prematurity ...	...	...	...	26
Congenital conditions	...	...	...	19
Atelectasis ...	...	...	...	4
Cerebral haemorrhage	...	...	...	3
Broncho-pneumonia ...	...	...	...	3
Intra-uterine Asphyxia	...	...	...	2
Cerebral Anoxia ...	...	...	...	1
Birth trauma ...	...	...	...	1
				59

50 of the 59 deaths occurred in hospitals.

Opportunity accordingly has been taken to discuss these deaths with the Consultant Paediatrician at St. Catherine's Hospital, where 41 deaths occurred. Particular attention was paid to the largest group, i.e., prematurity. In eleven cases, it is felt that a more correct classification should be "abortion" and these cases should not have been included as "prematures".

The lengths of gestation in these cases were never more than 28 weeks—the shortest being 20 weeks and the matter of actual life being doubtful in practically all these cases. In four cases, the correct classification would have been "still birth".

Out of the 41 cases, 15 could have been classified otherwise than as infant deaths and would have affected materially the infant death rate—a reduction to 27.4 per 1,000 live births.

In a hospital outside the area where there were three premature infant deaths included in the neonatal deaths, the Consultant Paediatrician reports that all three were born about the time when possible viability could be expected (two were at the 28th week, one at the 26th week). If reliance is to be placed on statistics, and in particular on infant death rates, care must be taken in hospitals and elsewhere to give the correct classification. The infant death rate is an important index of efficiency of the Maternity and Paediatric Services of an area, and this efficiency ought not to be questioned as a result of classifying abortions and still-births as premature deaths.

If the neonatal death rate (deaths of infants under 4 weeks of age) is compared with the National figure, the Local (Birkenhead) figure of 23.7 per 1,000 live births is still high compared with the National figure of 16.9.

If the perinatal mortality is considered (still births and deaths of infants under 1 week per 1,000 total births) then the Birkenhead figure of 47.4 per 1,000 total births is high in comparison with the National figure of 37.7 for the last quarter in 1956.

Were the 11 deaths, which in a more exact definition would be abortions, not called premature deaths, the neonatal mortality rate for Birkenhead would be 19.3 which compares favourably with the National figure of 16.9 and the perinatal mortality rate for Birkenhead would be 44.6.

When the deaths in children between the ages of 4 weeks and 1 year are considered, the causes of death were as follows:—

Broncho-pneumonia ...	...	...	...	12
Whooping Cough ...	...	...	...	1
Bronchitis ...	...	...	...	1
Accidents (other than motor car) ...	...	...	...	4
Intussusception ...	...	...	...	1
Intracranial Sinus Thrombosis ...	...	...	...	1
Congenital Heart Disease ...	...	...	...	1
Multiple Osteomyelitis ...	...	...	...	1
Fibrocystic disease ...	...	...	...	1
Asphyxia (through inhalation of stomach contents) ...	...	...	...	1
				—
			TOTAL	24

It is alarming to find four children dying as a result of accidents other than motor car. These deaths might have been prevented. Health Visitors have been asked to concentrate in their home visits on accident prevention in the home. It is hoped that this will result in fewer children dying as a result of accidents.

Broncho pneumonia has been the cause of 12 deaths and, in spite of modern antibiotic treatment, it would appear that pneumonia is very much still a killing disease.

Maternal Deaths: There were two maternal deaths during the year, both caused by eclampsia. This represents a maternal mortality rate, of 0.78 per 1,000 total births.

Deaths from Tuberculosis:

		Rate per 1,000 England & Wales population	
Respiratory	25	0.17	0.11
Non-respiratory	1	0.007	0.12
TOTAL	—	—	—
	26	—	—

Deaths from Cancer of the Lung: A welcome drop in the numbers dying from cancer of the lung is noted. During the year 48 men and 8 women died as compared with 65 men and 17 women in 1955.

		Male	Female	Total
1951	...	44	5	49
1952	...	46	10	56
1953	...	45	8	53
1954	...	57	5	62
1955	...	65	17	82
1956	...	48	8	56

COUNTY BOROUGH OF BIRKENHEAD.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR 1956.

CORRIGENDUM

Page 4 : Deaths from Tuberculosis.

Non-respiratory death rate for England and Wales should
read 0.012 instead of 0.12.

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1955	...	65	17	82
1956	...	48	8	56

The rate per 1,000 population is 0.39 compared with the national figure of 0.41 per 1,000 population.

Deaths from Cancer of other Sites: These deaths numbered 237 representing 1.67 per 1,000 population compared with the national figure of 1.61 per 1,000 population.

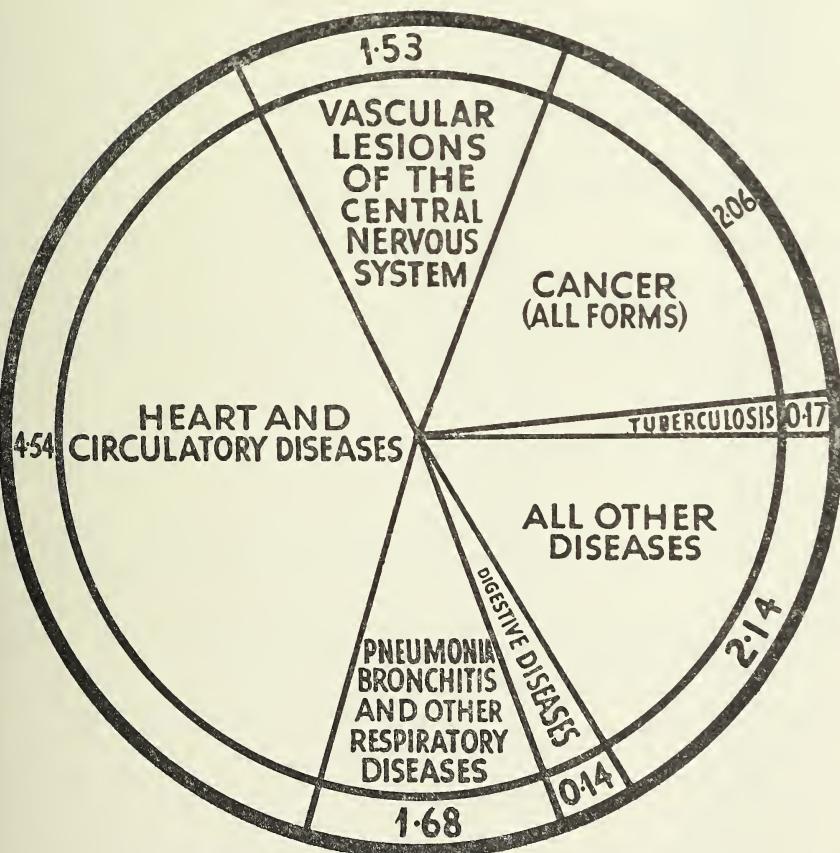
Heart Disease: This accounted for 577 deaths and is still the greatest cause of death.

Deaths from Infectious Diseases

Whooping Cough	...	...	...	...	1
Meningococcal Infections	...	...	...	...	2
Poliomyelitis	...	...	...	...	1
Other infective and parasitic conditions	...	...	...	...	4
Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	104

There were no deaths from measles or diphtheria.

Main Death Rates per 1,000 of the Population, 1956:



CAUSES OF DEATH AT DIFFERENT PERIODS OF LIFE—1956
(As compiled by the Registrar-General)

CAUSES OF DEATH AT DIFFERENT PERIODS OF LIFE—1956
(Continued)

(As compiled by the Registrar-General)

Causes of Death	Sex	All Ages	0-	1-	5-	15-	25-	45-	65-	75-
All Causes	Male	885	42	2	4	8	39	264	241	285
	Female	868	41	8	5	7	35	150	235	387
30. Pregnancy, childbirth abortion	Male	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	Female	2	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	—
31. Congenital malformations ...	Male	12	9	—	—	1	1	1	—	—
	Female	10	7	1	1	—	1	—	—	—
32. Other defined and ill- defined diseases ...	Male	61	19	1	1	—	5	12	7	16
	Female	101	25	1	1	—	3	12	18	41
33. Motor vehicle accidents	Male	13	—	—	1	3	5	1	2	1
	Female	7	—	1	—	2	3	1	—	—
34. All other accidents ...	Male	26	3	—	2	2	3	5	3	8
	Female	16	1	1	1	1	1	—	1	10
35. Suicide	Male	7	—	—	—	—	1	4	1	1
	Female	3	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	1
36. Homicide and opera- tions of war ...	Male	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	Female	2	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	—

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Measles and whooping cough formed the greater number of notifications.

805 confirmed cases of measles and 562 confirmed cases of whooping cough occurred during the year. One death from whooping cough occurred.

60 confirmed cases of scarlet fever were notified during the year, all of a mild type.

Five paralytic cases of poliomyelitis and one non-paralytic case were confirmed. There was one death due to poliomyelitis.

Of the 146 cases of dysentery the vast majority were due to the Sonné bacillus. Many of the cases were entirely symptomless.

Fortunately the year was uneventful.

	Acute Poliomyelitis												Whooping Cough				Dysentery			
	Meningo-coccal Infection				Scarlet Fever				Diphtheria				Non-paralytic				Measles			
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Numbers originally notified ...	5	4	28	32	1	1	—	—	5	1*	1	433	373	263	303	82	88			
Final numbers after correction: Age under 1 year ...	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	16	20	25	30	1	9			
Age 1 —	—	—	3	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	47	32	35	32	7	7			
Age 2 —	—	—	2	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	96	46	38	44	6	11			
Age 3 —	—	—	1	3	6	—	—	1	—	—	—	80	49	45	49	7	9			
Age 4 —	—	—	—	1	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	61	66	25	40	5	5			
Age 5 — 9 years ...	—	—	—	15	15	—	—	—	1	—	—	158	154	89	97	23	12			
Age 10 — 14 years ...	—	—	2	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	2	2	2	8	4			
Age 15 — 24 years ...	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	1	2	9	
Age 25 and over ...	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	1	2	2	5	7	14		
Totals ...	1	2	28	32	—	—	1	4	—	1	433	372	262	300	66	80				

*Confirmed as paralytic poliomyelitis

		Acute Primary and Influenza Pneumonia			Enteric or Typhoid Fever			Malaria			Para-typhoid Fever			Ery- sipelas			Small Pox			Puer- peral Pyrexia			Acute Encephalitis			Ophthal- mia Neona- torum			
		M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.		
Number originally notified	...	96	87	—	—	2	—	—	—	13	10	—	—	—	—	65	1	—	—	162	163	1	1	—	—	—	—		
Final numbers after correction: Under 5 years	...	26	28	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	
Age 5 — 14 years	...	6	13	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Age 15 — 44 years	...	14	13	—	—	2	—	—	—	3	3	—	—	—	—	65	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Age 45 — 64 years	...	27	11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Age 65 and over	...	16	18	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals	...	89	83	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	12	9	—	—	65	—	—	—	3	3	1	1	—	

SUSPECTED FOOD POISONING CASES AND INFECTIOUS DISEASE CASES ASSOCIATED WITH FOOD AND/OR DRINK

495 cases of suspected food poisoning were investigated during the year. Investigations involved 432 visits to patient's houses and the submission of 555 specimens for bacteriological examination.

Remnants of food suspected to have caused food poisoning are rarely available for examination and in only 3 cases was it possible to submit such samples for examination. None showed the presence of pathogenic organisms.

The causal agent was confirmed in the following cases:—

Shigella Sonnei	...	...	...	111 cases
Salmonella typhimurium	...	...	...	5 cases
Salmonella enteritidis	...	...	...	1 case

The food poisoning cases all occurred in isolated outbreaks at different times and could not be related to one another. Each outbreak was confined to one household.

The need for close attention to personal hygiene has continued to be stressed during these investigations. Until the public generally, and food handlers in particular, are educated from an early age in the automatic habit of hand washing after using the toilet, an unnecessary spread of food-borne infections will continue.

During the year approximately 1,200 samples of various kinds have been submitted to the Public Health Laboratory, Birkenhead, whose director, J. Morrison Ritchie, M.A., M.B., C.H.B., D.P.H., and staff have continued to give every help in our investigations.

TUBERCULOSIS

Notifications

The total number of cases of Tuberculosis notified during the year was 158.

This number shows a decrease of 55 from that of 1955.

Mortality

The total number of deaths certified as due to Tuberculosis was as follows:—

Respiratory	...	...	...	...	25
Non-Respiratory	...	...	...	...	1

Tuberculosis Register

At the 31st December, 1956, the register showed an increase of 36 compared with 31st December, 1955.

			Adults	Children (under 15 yrs.)	Total
Respiratory—	Male	...	741	65	806
	Female	...	605	63	668
Non-Respiratory—	Male	...	29	56	85
	Female	...	46	42	88
Total—	Male	...	770	121	891
	Female	...	651	105	756
TOTAL	...	...	1421	226	1647

FORMAL NOTIFICATIONS DURING YEAR
NUMBER OF PRIMARY NOTIFICATIONS OF NEW CASES OF TUBERCULOSIS

AGE PERIOD	0-	1-	2-	5-	10-	15-	20-	25-	35-	45-	55-	65-	75-	Total	
Respiratory—															
Males	—	—	4	1	2	5	8	7	6	12	12	7	1	65	
Females	...	2	—	—	2	15	8	12	4	—	2	1	—	48	
Non-Respiratory—															
Males	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	
Females	...	—	—	—	—	1	3	1	—	2	—	1	—	8	
TOTAL	2	—	4	3	5	21	19	20	10	14	14	9	1	122

NEW CASES OTHER THAN BY FORMAL NOTIFICATION

Death returns from Local Registrars	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Respiratory—	Males	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	
Non-Respiratory—	Males	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Females	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Death returns from Registrars—General (Transferable deaths)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Respiratory—	Males	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	
Non-Respiratory—	Males	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Females	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Posthumous Notifications	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Respiratory—	Males	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	
Non-Respiratory—	Males	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Females	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
TOTAL	—	2	1	5										
															TOTAL ... 127

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES

Cremation

The Medical Officer of Health is Medical Referee to the Landican Crematorium. During the year, 1,870 cremations took place compared with 1,752 in 1955.

Medical Examinations

The following medical examinations were carried out by the Medical Staff during the year:—

Fitness for entry into the Corporation's Service	...	...	454
Fitness for entry into the Local Government Superannuation Scheme	...	...	193
Re-examinations	...	...	94
Special Reports	...	...	103
Fitness for driving P.S. Vehicles under the Road Traffic Acts, 1930-1947	...	...	37
Examinations of Gravediggers for signs of Silicosis	...	...	12
Examination of Tar Workers for Tar Workers' Cancer	...	...	7
Examination of candidates for entry into Teachers' Training Colleges (Form 4 RTC)	...	...	80
Examination of candidates for Employment as Teachers (Form 28 RQ)	...	...	17
Examination of School Meals Staff	...	...	228
			—
Total Examinations	...	1,225	—

British Empire Cancer Campaign—Cheshire and North Wales Branch

The Department continued to co-operate in the research work carried out by this Branch since 1952. Over 200 investigations yearly have been carried out in the enquiries into environmental factors in the histories of residents within the Borough dying from cancer. The general public has co-operated very well indeed. The investigation was concluded in July 1956.

Air Pollution

Weekly samples of the suspended matter in a measured quantity of air are sent for analysis, together with daily readings of temperature and barometric pressure. Cylinders of lead peroxide were also exposed for the monthly measurement of the amount of SO_2 in the atmosphere.

INCIDENCE OF BLINDNESS

On the 31st December, 1956, there were on the Register of Blind Persons, the names of 124 males and 189 females, making a total of 313.

The corresponding number on the register on the same date in 1955 was 296.

10 males and 37 females were added to the Register during the year. Removals from the Borough, deaths and decertifications accounted

for the deletion of 15 males and 21 females, and transfers from other areas to the Borough accounted for 1 male and 5 females.

The number of persons on the register of Partially Sighted People on the 31st December, 1956, was 85 (38 males and 47 females). The corresponding number on the same date in 1955 was 73. During the year the names of 22 persons (6 males and 16 females) were added to the register. Deaths and removal from the Borough accounted for the deletion of 9 names from the Register.

With very few exceptions, those qualifying during the year for inclusion in the registers of Blind and Partially Sighted Persons were over the age of 65. 2 children in the age group 5-15 years were found to be blind.

Examinations for the purpose of certification are, in accordance with the Ministry of Health directions, now carried out by an Ophthalmic Surgeon of consultant status, and numbered 84 including 15 re-examinations.

The cause of blindness in the 47 cases registered as being blind within the meaning of the National Assistance Act, 1948, during the year, was as follows:—

Cataract	...	...	...	...	...	25
Glaucoma	...	...	...	...	...	2
Congenital and Myopic Defects	...	...	...	...	...	20

The partially sighted persons notified in the same period were 12 cataract cases, 9 congenital or myopic defects and one glaucoma.

A—Follow-up of Registered Blind and Partially Sighted Persons

(i) Number of Cases registered during the year in respect of which para. 7(c) of Form B.D.8 recommends:—

(a) No treatment
 (b) Treatment (Medical, surgical or optical)

(ii) Number of cases at (i)(a) above which on follow-up action have received treatment

	Cause of Disability			
	Cataract	Glaucoma	Retrobulbar Fibroplasia	Others
(a) No treatment	20	1	—	19
(b) Treatment (Medical, surgical or optical)	15	2	—	12
(ii) Number of cases at (i)(a) above which on follow-up action have received treatment	—	—	—	3

B—Ophthalmia Neonatorum

(i) Total number of cases notified during the year	2
(ii) Number of cases in which (a) vision lost (b) vision impaired (c) treatment continuing at end of year	Nil

SPASTICS AND EPILEPTICS**Spastic Pupils**

The particulars given below relate to the number of Birkenhead children known to be suffering from spastic conditions as at 31st December.

School Children—

Attending Ordinary Schools	...	...	...	20 pupils
,, Day Special School for Educationally Subnormal Children	...	...	4	,,
,, Boarding Special School for Physically Handicapped Children	...	...	3	,,
At home not receiving education	...	...	4	,,
			—	
			31	,,

Pre-School Children—

At home not receiving education	...	...	9	,,
Combined total	...	...	40	,,

Epileptics

There are 47 epileptics on the Handicapped Persons Register. 34 live in their own homes and 13 are in Epileptic Colonies.

The problem of epilepsy in school children is not an acute one—only 1 child is registered on the Handicapped Pupils Register as an epileptic. In medical inspections in 1956, 6 children were noted to be kept under observation.

**LOCAL HEALTH AUTHORITY SERVICES UNDER THE
NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE ACT, 1946
CARE OF MOTHERS AND YOUNG CHILDREN**

Ante-natal Clinics

Ante-natal clinics were held once weekly at the Central Clinic and the North and South Clinics. Clinics were held on 154 occasions, the number of patients dealt with being 904 and the total number of

attendances made being 2,748. Of this total 104 patients attended the Clinics during the previous year.

Below are set out the details of attendances at Clinics:—

Clinic	No. of Sessions	No. of Cases	No. of Attendances
Central, Conway St. ...	52	426	1139
North	51	198	630
South	51	280	979

Infant Welfare Clinics

At the end of the year Clinics were being held as follows:—

Central Clinic: Monday and Wednesday afternoons, 2 to 5 p.m.

South Clinic: Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons, 2 to 5 p.m.

North Clinic: Wednesday and Thursday afternoons, 2 to 5 p.m.

Balls Road Clinic: Thursday and Friday afternoons, 2 to 5 p.m.

Upton Clinic: Tuesday afternoons, 2 to 5 p.m.

Woodchurch Clinic: Monday afternoons, 2 to 5 p.m.

Attendances at Clinics. Below are set out details of attendances at Clinics:

CLINIC	Attendance of under 1's	1—2	2—5	Total attendances	No. of sessions	Total 1st visits	Total re-visits	Doctor's 1st visits	Doctor's re-visits
North*	3309	333	420	4062	150	365	3697	340	1538
South*	3879	394	303	4576	149	478	4098	448	1455
Central	2533	143	224	2900	98	385	2515	379	897
Balls Road...	3127	437	172	3736	103	289	3447	282	1136
Upton	902	99	69	1070	51	104	966	103	325
Woodchurch	1012	115	112	1239	48	119	1120	113	402
Totals ...	14762	1521	1300	17583	599	1740	15843	1665	5753

* Include Toddler Clinics

Toddler Clinics

Toddler Clinics for children between the age of one and five years are held at the North and South Clinics each Monday between 2 and 5 p.m. including an appointment system for two-year olds.

Dental Treatment

By arrangement with the Education Committee, expectant and nursing mothers and children under 5 years of age can receive dental treatment by the School Dental Staff at the School Dental Clinic.

The following tables give details of the dental care provided:—

	Examined	Needing Treatment	Treated	Made Dentally fit
Expectant and Nursing Mothers	12	12	9	6
Children under Five ...	139	134	113	110

Forms of Dental Treatment provided:—

	Scaling and Gum Treatment	Fillings	Silver Nitrate Treatment	Crowns or Inlays	Extractions	General Anaesthetics	Dentures Provided	Radio-graph
Expectant and Nursing Mothers	1	1	—	—	52	7	6	—
Children under Five	—	11	10	—	239	111	—	1

Day Nurseries

The following table shows the attendances during the year.

Name of Nursery	Capacity	No. on register at end of the year		Average daily attendances during the year	
		0—2	2—5	0—2	2—5
Cavendish Road	25 places	10	11	7	12
Old Chester Road	25 „	10	16	3	15

Owing to increased demand for nursery accommodation the number of places at Old Chester Road was increased to 25 as from June 1956.

Nurseries and Child Minders Regulation Act, 1948

There is one registration under this Act, 72 Cavendish Drive.

Nursing Homes Registration—Public Health Act, 1936, Section 187

At the end of the year there were four Nursing Homes registered in the Borough.

All Nursing Homes are inspected periodically by the Senior Assistant Medical Officer.

Care of Unmarried Mothers and Children

Arrangements are in operation for the care and welfare of unmarried mothers and their children. Close co-operation is maintained with moral welfare associations and churches of all denominations.

These expectant mothers are encouraged to attend ante-natal clinics and to enter mother and baby homes where it is deemed desirable. The usual practice is for the expectant mother to enter the home before the confinement and to remain following the birth of her baby. The usual length of stay averages twelve weeks.

Care of Premature Infants

During the year, 247 premature babies were born, 37 were still born and 210 born alive. 182 were born in hospital or Nursing Homes and 65 born at home. Premature babies are the subject of particular attention by Midwives and Health Visitors.

Convalescent Treatment

20 children under the age of 5 years were recommended for convalescent treatment during the year.

Voluntary Agencies Assisted by Local Authority

- (a) St. Elizabeth's Convent. Number of attendances during year:—
Children under 1 year 175 1st visits, 609 revisits.
- (b) Birkenhead and District Mothers' Welfare Clinic. Of the 783 new patients who were given advice at the Clinic during the year, 293 were residents of the Borough.

Maternal Mortality

There were two maternal deaths during the year.

Distribution of Welfare Foods

Arrangements continue in operation for the distribution of National Welfare Foods at 12 Centres in the Borough.

Two of the Distribution Centres, i.e., Grange Road West and St. Peter's Hall, Rock Ferry, are staffed by members of the W.V.S.

MIDWIVES SERVICE

Number of Midwives

During the year 54 midwives gave notice of their intention to practise in the Borough, as follows:—

Municipal Midwives	...	...	...	...	12
Maternity Hospital Midwife	...	...	...	...	1
Private Midwives	...	...	...	...	4
Midwives in Hospitals and Institutions	...	...	...	...	35
Midwives in Private Nursing Homes	...	...	...	...	2
					—
				54	
					—

Supervision

Dr. A. M. Williams, Senior Assistant Medical Officer, acts as Medical Supervisor of Midwives.

The Non-Medical Supervisor of Midwives, Miss M. Pringle, S.R.N., S.C.M., M.T.D., carried out the following work:—

Inspection of midwives: Visits to midwives' homes	...	...	65
Interviews at Office	...	...	560
Nursing visits	...	...	402

Visits in connection with:—

Cases requiring medical aid	...	...	...	...	76
Cases of puerperal pyrexia	...	...	...	...	2
Cases of stillbirth	...	...	...	...	7
Expectant mothers	...	...	...	...	57
Other visits	...	...	...	...	48
Attendances at Ante-natal Clinics	...	...	...	...	143

Number of cases attended by midwives—812.

The number of domiciliary confinements attended by midwives alone (no doctor in attendance) numbered 602.

Cases requiring medical aid

129 cases were notified by midwives in which medical aid had been called, as against 123 last year.

Notifications received from Midwives

Stillbirths	...	...	...	...	...	11
*Substitution of artificial feeding	...	...	...	...	...	152
Deaths	...	...	...	...	...	1

Municipal Midwives

The following is a summary of the work of the Municipal Midwives during the year:—

No. of Bookings	...	...	...	...	...	806
No. of Births attended:—						
(a) as Maternity Nurse	...	...	160			
(b) as Midwife	...	...	485			
				645		

No. of visits to patients	15,450
---------------------------	-----	-----	-----	-----	--------

*Including hospital notifications

Birkenhead Maternity Hospital

The following is a summary of the domiciliary work carried out by the Hospital Midwifery Staff under an agreement between the Local Authority and the Hospital Authority:—

No. of bookings	...	...	...	...	...	113
No. of domiciliary births	...	...	...	...	...	106
No. of visits to homes of patients	...	...	...	...	...	4,929

Independent Midwives

Independent Midwives attended 27 cases as Midwives and 34 cases as Maternity Nurses during the year.

Gas and air analgesia

Gas and air analgesia was administered by the Municipal Midwives to 492 patients and by the Maternity Hospital District Midwifery Staff to 73 patients.

Ophthalmia Neonatorum

Two cases were notified during the year.

HEALTH VISITING

The staff engaged on Health Visiting in the Borough consists of a Superintendent and 17 Health Visitors, and 2 part-time Health Visitors.

The Health Visitors are employed on all sections of the medical work of the Department thus obtaining co-ordination between the Public Health, Maternity and Child Welfare and School Health Services. Each Visitor is allotted a district of the Borough for which she is responsible.

Visiting in the Home

The following is a summary of work done by Health Visitors:—

2,441 first visits were paid to infants under one year old.

15,388 subsequent visits were paid to infants under one year old.

20,759 routine visits were paid to infants over one year and under five years old.

*251 first visits were paid to expectant mothers.

428 re-visits were paid to expectant mothers.

686 visits were paid in connection with miscellaneous matters.

5,255 visits were paid in which no access could be obtained.

Clinic Duties

Health Visitors attended 1,725 Clinic Sessions during the year (1,178 Infant Welfare; 183 Ante-natal; 88 Sunlight; 99 Superannuation Sessions; B.C.G. Vaccination 177).

Visits to Tuberculous Cases

The homes of tuberculous persons are visited by Health Visiting Staff, to help and advise the patient and the family.

Health Visitors made 165 first visits and 3,797 re-visits.

*Does not include visits paid by the Non-Medical Supervisor of Midwives.

HOME NURSING SERVICE

During the year the Home Nursing Service was transferred from 2 Park Road South to the clinic at 40 Balls Road which is shared with the Infant Welfare Centre. Garage accommodation is available. Thanks to the willing co-operation of the Superintendent and the Nursing Staff the move was effected smoothly.

In January a male nurse was appointed and his work is much appreciated particularly by elderly male patients.

In the beginning of the year an acute shortage of staff necessitated ceasing the giving of injections unless the patients required actual nursing. At the end of May this branch of work was resumed.

The arrangements continue which were put into operation last year whereby patients who are not confined to the house attend Balls Road at specified times for treatment.

Nursing equipment is loaned to patients and a nominal charge is made for the loan dependent upon the circumstances of the case, but where found desirable, articles are loaned free of charge.

Summary of Cases nursed during the year

Brought forward from 1955	...	...	...	...	371
New Cases	...	...	...	...	1,696
Total cases nursed	...	...	...	...	2,067

Nursing Services provided for new cases at the request of:—

Doctors	...	...	...	...	...	1,469
Patients, Relatives and Friends	...	...	...	...	...	38
Medical Officer of Health	...	...	...	...	...	27
Hospitals	...	...	...	...	...	154
Other sources	...	...	...	...	...	8
						1,696

Classification of cases nursed and visits paid:—

		Cases	Visits
(1) Medical	...	1,529	40,694
(2) Surgical	...	241	9,350
(3) Tuberculosis	...	144	6,322
(4) Maternal Complications	...	165	165

Visits:—

To patients over 65 years of age	...	...	...	21,767
" " under 5 "	,,	,,	,,	151

The following statistics give particulars of visits paid to patients for the purpose of giving injections only:—

		Patients	Visits
Penicillin	...	325	2,662
Streptomycin	...	113	4,260

Various Cardiac Drugs	...	...	140	4,518
Insulin...	...	...	39	3,771
Cytamin	...	...	114	2,442
Others	...	...	27	473
Totals	...	...	758	18,126

VACCINATION AND IMMUNISATION

Diphtheria Immunisation

It is estimated that 44 per cent. of children under five years and 82 per cent of the school population have been immunised.

The number of children dealt with during the year was as follows:—

		Primary	Reinforcing Injections
0— 4 years ...	...	1,170	14
5— 9 years ...	...	722	1,309
10—14 years ...	...	91	811
15 years and over	...	9	16
		<hr/> 1,992	<hr/> 2,150

This work was shared as follows between General Practitioners and Medical Officers of the Health Department.

	Medical Officers	General Practitioners
Immunisation against Diphtheria	1,243	423
Reinforcing Injections against Diphtheria	1,985	165
Combined Whooping Cough and Diphtheria Immunisation ...	—	326

The following tabulated statement shows the numbers immunised against diphtheria each year since 1935:—

Immunisation against Whooping Cough

Requests for immunisation against Whooping Cough were dealt with at the Clinics as follows:—

0—1 years	...	...	...	...	...	...	9
1—2 „	...	...	...	...	...	...	58
2—3 „	...	...	...	...	...	...	27
3—4 „	...	...	...	...	...	...	13
4—5 „	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
5—6 „	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
							116

Vaccination against Smallpox

During the year the following vaccinations have been carried out:—

By Medical Officers at Child Welfare Clinics	...	...	301
By General Practitioners	...	...	1,146
			1,447

The accompanying table shows the age groups of the persons vaccinated (or re-vaccinated).

Age at Date of Vaccination	0—1 Years	1 to 2 Years	2 to 4 Years	5 to 14 Years	15 Years & over	Total
Number vaccinated..	765	50	83	46	43	987
Number re-vaccinated	—	3	9	33	415	460

Number of cases specially reported (age groups as above)—None.

Vaccination against Poliomyelitis

During 1956 37 children were immunised against Poliomyelitis and 5 children had one injection.

AMBULANCE SERVICE

Early in the year the Authority submitted proposals to the Ministry of Health for a variation of its scheme under Section 27 of the National Health Service Act, 1946, to provide for the partial separation of the Ambulance Service from the Fire Brigade. The Minister gave his approval to this with effect from the 1st August, 1956.

The Chief Fire Officer remains responsible for the supervision and administration of the Ambulance Service and I am indebted to him for the following report in respect of the year 1956.

47,874 calls were responded to by the Ambulance Brigade; an increase of 1,913 upon the previous year.

Upon the separation of the establishment from the Fire Brigade, a total of 27 members of the Brigade applied to remain with the Ambulance Service. Pending absorption three further members of the Brigade were seconded temporarily, thus requiring the appointment of only five recruits. This enabled the Service upon separation to operate efficiently from the outset, the only problem being to increase the number of drivers. Until the petrol shortage, courses were being held for this purpose.

Greater use continues to be made by the medical profession and hospitals of hospitals and clinics outside the Borough, involving longer runs, but the re-siting of the Master Radio Control, with its consequent increase of range, has largely offset this difficulty.

Establishment	Establishment	Strength
Shift Leaders ...	4	4
Driver Attendants ...	31	31
Control Room (Women) ...	4	4
	—	—
	39	39
	—	—

Variations

Retirement

1 Driver Attendant (Local Government Superannuation Act).

Resignation

1 Driver Attendant (Disliked Shift Work).

Promotions

2 Driver Attendants to Shift Leader.

Appointments

6 Driver Attendants.

Recruitment

Applications received ...	...	...	...	...	13
Applications accepted ...	...	...	...	...	6

Average length of service

8 years 9 months.

Sickness

Not due to Service ... 220 days lost—1.72%

Classification of Calls

Type	Calls	Patients	Mileage
Emergency ...	5,342	5,410	22,331
Removals ...	39,851	40,191	133,741
Special Services ...	2,027	—	6,920
Abortive ...	654	—	1,789
	—	—	—
	47,874	45,601	164,781
	—	—	—

Included in the Abortive are 29 malicious calls, which seems to indicate that the public Ambulance Service is now having to face the same problem which has confronted Fire Brigades for many years.

Mutual Assistance:—

Assistance to—		Calls	Mileage
Wallasey	...	...	11
Cheshire	...	...	14
Others ...	...	...	26
		—	—
		51	523
		—	—

Assistance from—		Calls	Mileage
Wallasey	...	...	—
Cheshire	...	...	—
Others	...	...	1
		—	—
		1	62
		—	—

Standbys:—

Standby for		Standby from	
Wallasey	18	Wallasey	5
Bebington	5	Bebington	—
Deeside	1	Deeside	—

Vehicle Strength:—

Ambulances 4-stretcher	...	...	...	...	5
Ambulances 2-stretcher	...	...	...	...	4
Sitting Case Vehicles	...	...	...	...	3
				—	—
				12	—
				—	—

PREVENTION OF ILLNESS, CARE AND AFTER CARE**Care and After Care Committee**

The constitution of the Committee remains unchanged being composed of representatives of the Health Committee, the John Lloyd Corkhill Trust, the British Red Cross Society and the St. John Ambulance Brigade. Under an arrangement with the Regional Hospital Board, Dr. E. Blackstock, Tuberculosis Officer, continues to deal with cases coming under the scheme.

The Tuberculosis Almoner has her office at the Chest Clinic at 42, Hamilton Square, Birkenhead, and continues to visit the Chest Clinic at Mill Lane Hospital, Wallasey, in order to maintain contact with the Birkenhead residents who attend the Wallasey Clinic.

Chalets, nursing requisites, destructable sputum cups, paper handkerchiefs and free milk are supplied to patients where necessary.

During the year 2,451 interviews were held in the Almoner's Office, 1,134 home and hospital visits were made, 140 patients were referred to the National Assistance Board for financial help.

Forty-four families living under unsatisfactory housing conditions were referred to the Housing Committee for consideration and 32 families were provided with Corporation houses during the year.

Christmas festivities, summer coach trips, extra comforts for patients at home and in hospital were provided by the John Lloyd Corkhill Trust. The Trust also made cash grants to 13 needy patients and assisted other patients in various ways.

Nineteen patients were referred to the John Lloyd Corkhill Trust and to other organisations for holidays or for convalescent treatment.

Health Visiting

Each new case of tuberculosis in the Borough, which is notified to the Medical Officer of Health, is visited by a Health Visitor who advises as to nursing methods and the prevention of the spread of infection.

The Health Visitor also obtains details of all persons who are contacts either through proximity or relationship, and reports these, together with housing and family conditions to the Tuberculosis Medical Officer.

Occupational Therapy

The handicraft class for out-patients is held at St. James' Hospital each Thursday afternoon, and teaching is given on the wards for one session each week. With the introduction of a male teacher of handicrafts, the variety of crafts available for patients has widened and fresh interest has been aroused.

Under our arrangement with the Anne Glassey Workshop, Wallasey, seven patients attended the Workshop daily for Occupational Therapy.

Rehabilitation

Many patients return to their previous employers, or find their own employment when passed as fit for work.

Of the remainder, 72 registered under the Disabled Persons Employment Act and 60 were placed in employment by the Disablement Resettlement Officer. Five patients were sent to Industrial Rehabilitation Units. Fifteen patients were accepted as trainees under the Ministry of Labour Training Scheme and placed at the Anne Glassey Workshop, Wallasey, the Training Centre at Aintree and the Gregg Commercial College.

Institutional Rehabilitation continues at the Derwen Cripples Training College, and the Papworth Village Settlement.

Examination of Contacts

During the year 126 primary notifications were received, 1,947 adult contacts were asked to attend for X-ray examination and 644 children were given appointments for clinical examination and skin tests.

852 adult contacts attended—549 new contacts and 303 yearly reviews. 454 children attended of the 644 given appointments and 269 were given B.C.G. vaccination.

The decrease in child contacts examined as compared with 1,955 (a decrease of 96) may be attributed to the drop in primary notifications (126 in 1956 as compared with 159 in 1955).

The increase in the number of adult contacts X-rayed (an increase of 82 compared with 1955) is evidence of the use made of the static M.M.R. unit on Wednesday evenings.

The results of the contact examinations are as follows.

	Adults		Children (under 15 years)	Total
	Male	Female		
Diagnosed as Tuberculous ..	2	—	1	3
Diagnosed as Non-Tuberculous	242	297	461	1000
	244	297	462	1003

The examination of contacts represents 7.9 per notified case of tuberculosis.

B.C.G. Vaccination

Tuberculous contacts

As stated above, 454 children attended for clinical examination and Mantoux test. Of this number 74 were found to have a positive mantoux and were sent for X-ray examination. The parents of 48 children refused vaccination on their behalf and 53 children were referred to other Hospitals. Two student nurses and 269 children were vaccinated at the Chest Clinic at 42 Hamilton Square as against eight student nurses and 346 children in the year 1955.

The parents of 190 children refused to bring them in for examination.

Child contacts made 1,834 attendances during 1956.

School Children

The scheme for B.C.G. Vaccination of children aged between 13 and 14 years of age continued during the year.

Parents Notified	Children Tested	Mantoux Negative	Given B.C.G. Vaccin- ation	Mantoux Positive	Number X-rayed	Chest Normal
1838	985	692	649	233	222	222

DOMESTIC HELP SERVICE

The services of Domestic Helps are available for confinement and post-confinement cases and for persons who, owing to sickness, infirmity and other reasons require assistance in the home. In many cases the services provided to aged, infirm and chronic sick persons enable them to continue to live in their own homes and consequently relieves the demand for hospital and institutional accommodation.

There is a charge for the service, but where the person requiring help cannot pay the full charge, it is reduced according to the financial circumstances of the case.

The Domestic Help Organiser continues to work in close co-operation with medical practitioners, the Welfare Department, the National Assistance Board and Voluntary Organisations.

During the year, the number of persons provided with domestic help was 616 against 533 in 1955, an increase of 73.

At the 31st December, 1956, four full-time and 49 part-time workers were employed (24 of the part-time work the equivalent of full-time).

During the year 1,486 visits were paid to households by the Organiser and her Assistant in investigating applications and supervising the work of Domestic Helpers.

Cases Provided with Domestic Help During the Year—

Maternity	...	...	...	...	...	60
Tuberculosis	...	...	...	...	...	27
Chronic Sick, Aged and Infirm				...	...	488
Others	...	...	...	...	...	41
						616

Number of Hours Worked by Domestic Helpers—

Maternity, Illness, etc., Cases	...	...	5,988 $\frac{1}{2}$
Chronic Sick, Aged and Infirm	...	...	56,068 $\frac{1}{2}$
			62,057

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Psychiatric Clinic (St. Catherine's Hospital)

No. of cases referred to Clinic by D.A.O's	M.	F.	Total
,, „ „ „ from Clinic to D.A.O's	4	7	11
	25	23	48

“No Action” Cases

These are cases where, after investigation, it was found that action under the Lunacy and Mental Treatment Acts was not necessary.

Assistance, which can be described as “prevention,” was afforded in appropriate cases, and they were referred to the official or voluntary bodies most likely to help them.

				M.	F.	Total
No further action	...	...	...	22	13	35
To Welfare Officer	...	...	...	—	2	2
To Police	...	...	...	2	1	3
To Hospitals	...	...	...	3	5	8

After-Care Cases discharged from Mental Hospitals or Psychiatric Clinics:—

				M.	F.	Total
Referred for After-Care	...	...	...	44	54	98
Refused After-Care	...	...	...	13	5	18

LUNACY AND MENTAL TREATMENT ACTS

Admissions to Hospitals under the Lunacy Act, 1890 (as amended):—

				M.	F.	Total	for 1955
Sec. 20 (3 Day Detention Order)	...	97	75	170	123		
Sec. 21 (14 Day Justice's Order)	...	11	19	30	47		
Sec. 16 (Certification) ...	...	34	99	133	154		
Sec. 5 (Private Patients)	...	—	2	2	1		
Sec. 64/67 (Transfers) ...	...	1	1	2	2		
Sec. 11 (Urgency Orders) ...	...	—	—	—	—	
Dealt with for other L.A's ...	...	11	29	40	55		

Admissions under the Mental Treatment Act, 1930 (as amended):—

				M.	F.	Total	for 1955
Sec. 1 (1) (Voluntary Patients)	...	106	109	215	179		
Sec. 1 (2) (Voluntary Patient under 16)	...	1	—	1	1		
Sec. 5 (Temporary Patients) ...	...	1	1	2	5		

The Duly Authorised Officers have given assistance and advice regarding the admission of patients to private mental hospitals and private wards of mental hospitals.

There has again been a marked increase of admissions under the Mental Treatment Act.

Cases dealt with under the Mental Treatment Act are usually first seen by a Psychiatrist.

Board of Control Circular 999

Cases from areas of other Local Health Authorities detained in Birkenhead Mental Hospital, in which the Birkenhead Duly Authorised Officers undertook certification and, where necessary, removal to other Mental Hospitals:—

Males	Females	Total (1956)	Total (1955)
11	29	40	60

Hospital Admissions

During the latter part of the year both male and female wards at Birkenhead Mental Hospital were reopened following alterations. The reduction in available beds while the alterations were in progress is reflected

in the number of cases dealt with on behalf of other local authorities and in the amount of travelling undertaken by the Duly Authorised Officers.

The ready assistance given by the magistrates who are always willing even at the most inconvenient times to render assistance is much appreciated by the Duly Authorised Officers. The interest shown and ready co-operation of all the Justices undertaking this work are gratefully acknowledged.

MENTAL DEFICIENCY ACTS, 1913-1938

At the end of the year, the distribution of Birkenhead Mental Defectives was as follows:—

No. on Register	...	...	...	...	...	401
No. in Institutions	...	...	...	...	183	
No. on Licence from Institutions	...	...	...	...	—
No. under Guardianship	...	...	...	...	3	
No. under Home Supervision	...	...	...	...	215	
					401	
					—	

(i) **New Cases** notified to the Local Health Authority arose as follows:—

	M.	F.	Total
Under Education Act, 1944, Sec. 57(3)	6	6	12
Under Education Act, 1944, Sec. 57(5)	1	5	6
Other sources (transfers in, etc.)	2	2	4
—	—	—	—
9	13	22	
—	—	—	—

(ii) **Removals from Register**

	M.	F.	Total
Deaths, removals from area, etc.	5	5	10
Cancellations of Notification (under Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1948, Sec. 48)	—	—	—
Dealt with under the Lunacy Acts	—	1	1
—	—	—	—
5	6	11	
—	—	—	—

At the end of the year there were 19 urgent cases in need of permanent institutional accommodation. This compares favourably with the figure for 1955 which was 26.

Of these 19 cases eight were in "Place of Safety" accommodation. In addition, eight cases were classed as non-urgent. In addition four cases have been admitted to the "special units" provided by the Liverpool Regional Hospital Board. These cases remain on the waiting list of the Bed Bureau. Every help is given by the Joint Bed Bureau for Mental Defectives established by the Liverpool and Manchester Regional Hospital Boards. The difficulties experienced with lack of beds and staff are fully appreciated and the improvement in the position locally is welcomed by all concerned.

Guardianship

Two male defectives and one female defective remain under guardianship and are in receipt of allowances from the National Assistance Board.

A boy who is the responsibility of Denbighshire County Council is under guardianship and is supervised by the Mental Deficiency Officer.

Home Supervision

Visiting of mental defectives under home supervision was carried out by the Mental Deficiency Officer. During the year 593 visits were paid, and 511 reports were obtained.

Occupation Centre

Birkenhead mental defectives continue to attend the Wallasey Occupation Centre: attendances averaged 26 daily during the year.

As in the past, a Christmas Party was held at the Centre for the children. Parents were invited to attend and see examples of work done by the children. Singing and dancing, which reflected great credit on the patience and skill of the Centre staff in their work with these handicapped children, formed part of the entertainment.

NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT, 1948

Duties under this Act have been assigned to the Welfare Committee of the Council.

The Medical Officer of Health is in administrative control of the Welfare Department, the staff of which is housed in the Health Department Offices.

There is the utmost co-operation between the staffs and useful information about handicapped persons or aged and infirm is exchanged between Health Visitors, Public Health Inspectors, Duly Authorised Officers, Domestic Help Organiser and the Welfare Department.

It was not found necessary to take action in any case under Section 47 of the National Assistance Act, 1948, during the year under review.

WATER SUPPLY

The principal source of supply is Alwen Reservoir in Denbighshire, but subsidiary supplies are obtained from Flaybrick and Springhill Wells situated in the Borough.

The treated Alwen supply is soft in character and the mixed Alwen and Wells supply where distributed within the Borough is classed as moderately soft. It is both good in quality and quantity and is not liable to have plumbo-solvent action.

To meet the rising demands of the Undertaking, an additional source of supply has now been secured from the River Dee above Chester and construction of the necessary River Intake, Aqueduct and Treatment Works at Chester and Sealand are well advanced.

In connection with this scheme, a full-time Chemist and Bacteriologist has been appointed to the staff of the Water Engineer and a site laboratory is being built for control purposes at Ashgrove, near Chester. It is hoped that these new works will be commissioned during the Summer of 1957 and the Birkenhead wells will thereafter be placed in reserve.

Chemical examinations are made of the raw water and fully treated water before going into supply. Bacteriological examinations are made at regular intervals and the results, so far as the treated water is concerned, are universally satisfactory and show in all cases complete freedom from bacteriological impurity.

All the houses in the Borough, of which there are approximately 37,247, are supplied with water direct and there are no houses supplied by means of communal stand-pipes.

HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL HYGIENE

This section of the report details the work carried out by the Chief Public Health Inspector and the Staff of Public Health Inspectors.

INSPECTION AND REPAIR OF DWELLING HOUSES

All repairs to houses have been secured as a result of the service of notices under the Public Health Act, 1936 and the Birkenhead Corporation Act, 1954. No notices were served under Section 9 of the Housing Act, 1936.

3,766 complaints were received during the year. This is in addition to complaints made to the inspectors on their districts.

No. of inspections under the Public Health Act	...	10,426
No. of re-inspections under the Public Health Act	...	16,186
No. of informal notices served under the Public Health Act	...	3,043
No. of Statutory notices served under the Public Health Act	...	1,250
Average number of notices outstanding	...	754
No. of notices complied with during the year	...	2,975
Number of defects remedied during the year	...	7,544
Summary of Improvements effected:—		
Roofs repaired	...	1,057
Chimney stacks repaired	...	116
Rainwater gutters repaired	...	457
Downspouts repaired	...	213
Downspouts disconnected from drain	...	1
Walls pointed or repaired	...	383
Ventilation improved	...	16
Windows repaired	...	375
Window sashcords renewed	...	448
Firegrates repaired	...	192
Hearthstones repaired	...	19
Floors relaid or repaired	...	231
Skirting boards repaired	...	77
Wall plaster repaired	...	646

Ceiling plaster repaired	...	...	...	...	265
Walls and ceilings cleansed	...	...	...	...	11
Doors repaired	...	...	...	...	411
Staircases repaired	...	...	...	...	33
Sinks renewed	...	...	...	...	59
Sink waste pipes trapped or repaired	...	...	...	...	163
Washing boilers repaired	...	...	...	...	9
Dampness remedied	...	...	...	...	347
Yard surfaces repaired or relaid	...	...	...	...	158
Yards drained	...	...	...	...	13
Sufficient water supply provided	...	...	...	...	219
Drains constructed, altered or repaired	...	...	...	...	76
Drains cleansed	...	...	...	...	342
Water closets repaired	...	...	...	...	770
Watercourses, ditches cleansed	...	...	...	...	1
Nuisance from animals abated	...	...	...	...	8
Ashpits abolished	...	...	...	...	8
Verminous persons cleansed	...	...	...	...	4
Verminous premises cleansed	...	...	...	...	8
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	...	408

Legal Proceedings

Legal proceedings under Sec. 94, Public Health Act 1936, were instituted in 13 cases where owners had failed to comply with the requirements of abatement notices. Fines of £5. 0. 0d. in three cases and of £1. 0. 0d. in two cases were inflicted and total costs awarded amounted to £16. 13. 0d.

The Magistrates made nuisance orders in six instances where the work had not been completed at the time of the hearing of the summonses.

Work done by Local Authority in default of owners

The Local Authority cleansed obstructed drains at 35 houses where owners failed to comply with 48 hour notices under the provisions of Sec. 52 of the Birkenhead Corporation Act, 1954.

Repairs of an urgent nature were carried out at seven houses under the powers conferred by Sec. 66 of the Birkenhead Corporation Act, 1954.

By agreement with or at the request of owners, repairs of a general nature were completed at four houses under the provisions of the Public Health Act, 1936. In a further case work was carried out as the owner failed to comply with a Nuisance Order made by the Magistrates under the Public Health Act.

The costs of the above work are recoverable from the responsible persons.

Dwelling houses unfit for Human Habitation

29 houses and 5 parts of buildings used as dwelling houses were reported to the Health Committee as being unfit for human habitation and not capable at a reasonable expense of being rendered so fit under the provisions of Sections 11 and 12 of the Housing Act, 1936.

14 houses were demolished during the year and 19 houses or parts of buildings subject to Closing Orders were vacated. One part house was closed in pursuance of an undertaking given by the owner.

The number of persons displaced as a result of the operation of the Orders was 202.

The Council made the following orders during the year:

Demolition Orders in respect of	22 houses
Closing Orders (Sec. 12) in respect of	6 parts of buildings
Closing Orders under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1953, in respect of	5 houses
Accepted undertakings as to future user in respect of	2 houses and 1 part of a house

Clearance Areas

On the representation of the Medical Officer of Health clearance areas were declared by the Council under Part III of the Housing Act, 1936, in respect of the houses and buildings set out below.

Clearance Area	Description of premises	Totals
ST. ANNE STREET	Nos.: 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19 and 21 St. Anne Street.	9
MARKET STREET	Nos.: 199, 201, 203, 205, 207, 209, 211, 213, 215, 217 and 219 Market Street.	11
BECKWITH STREET	Nos.: 28, 30, 32, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42, 44 and 46 Beckwith Street.	14
ROBERTS STREET	Nos.: 65, 67, 69 and 71 Park Street. Nos.: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, 28, 28a, 30, 32 and 34 St. Anne Street. Nos.: 48, 50, 52, 54, 56 and 58 Park Street. Nos.: 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 31, 33, 35, 37 and 39, 2/8, 22 Roberts Street and Garage at rear of 129 Price Street.	64
BROOK STREET	Nos.: 39, 41/43, 45/47, 49, 51 and 53 Watson Street. Nos.: 127, 129, 131, 133, 151, 153/5, 157, 159, 161, 163, 165 and 167 Price Street. Nos.: 273, 275, 277, 279, 281, 283, 285, 287, 289, 291, 293, 295, 297, 299, 301, 303 and 305 Brook Street.	17
VINE STREET	Nos.: 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 31 and 33 Vine Street. Nos.: 260, 262, 264, 266, 268 and 270 Price Street.	20

QUEENSBURY STREET	Nos.: 116, 124, 124a, 126, 128, 130, 132, 138, 140, 142, 144, 146, 148, 150, 152 and 154 Price Street.	
	Nos.: 13, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 31, 33, 35, 37, 39, 41, 43, 36, 38, 40 and 42 Queensbury Street.	
	Nos.: 111, 113, 115, 117, 119, 121, 123, 125, 127, 129, 131, 133, 135, 137, 139, 141, 143, 145, 147, 149, 151 and 153/5 Brook Street.	73
	Nos.: 26, 32, 34, 36, 38, 40 and 42 Park Street.	
	Nos.: 19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 31 and 33 Watson Street.	
TOTALS:		
	Dwelling houses	187
	Other buildings	21
		208

During the year the Minister of Housing and Local Government confirmed the Grosvenor Street Compulsory Purchase Order, 1955, with certain modifications and the St. Anne Street, Market Street and Beckwith Street Areas, 1956, without modification.

Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954

		1920 Act	1954 Act
Number of applications for CERTIFICATES of DISREPAIR	—	40
Number of applications withdrawn	—	1
Number of certificates granted	—	40
Number of certificates refused	—	—
Number of applications for REVOCATION of certificates	—	43
Number of revocations granted	—	40
Number of revocations refused	—	3

Common Lodging Houses

Two premises were found to be used as Common Lodging Houses although the keepers of the houses were not registered with the Local Authority as required by Sec. 236 of the Public Health Act, 1936.

In one of these cases the conditions as to accommodation, repair and maintenance were quite unsatisfactory and legal proceedings were instituted. Costs of £5 5s. 0d. were awarded to the Corporation after the house had been put into a satisfactory state.

In the other case the keeper will be registered as soon as certain alterations required by the Chief Fire Officer have been completed.

At the end of the year there were 5 common lodging houses. These are for males only.

SMOKE ABATEMENT

No routine or planned smoke abatement work has been carried out for many years, but district inspectors make observations, from time to time, on chimneys which frequently emit an excessive amount of smoke. Where it appears that an offence may have been committed, the Inspector visits the works and interviews the manager or engineer. Usually the reasons given for causing excessive smoke are unsuitable fuel, or unskilled firemen, but in some cases it is evident that, providing sufficient steam can be raised, no care is taken in maintaining the plant or providing instrumental aids so as to avoid smoke emissions.

As a result of the direct representations from the department one factory installed mechanical stokers early in the year. This resulted in an almost smoke-free chimney stack in place of one that had previously given rise to continual complaints.

Under the provisions of the Birkenhead Corporation Act, 1954, Sec. 79, an application was received for the prior approval of a furnace. The proposed installation appeared to be satisfactory and was approved.

No. of smoke observations made ...	...	...	141
No. of visits to works re smoke emissions	...	...	25
No. of warning letters sent	...	...	10
No. of abatement notices served	...	...	2

EXTERMINATION OF PESTS

Rats and Mice

(a) **In Sewers.** All sewer manholes, except those found to be free from infestation on "test baiting", were treated twice during the year. This is in accordance with instructions of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

No. of manholes baited	...	...	...	5881
No. of "partial" takes recorded	...	...	...	920
No. of "complete" takes recorded	...	...	...	1422
No. of manholes "test baited"	...	...	...	2530

(b) **In surface Premises**

No. of premises inspected	...	...	...	776
No. of premises found to be infested with rats or mice	...	...	...	439
No. of treatments by rodent operator	...	...	...	321
Total number of visits by rodent operator	...	...	...	1224
Total number of visits by Public Health Inspectors	...	...	...	90

Insect Pests

No. of houses involved	...	...	...	57
No. of rooms treated	...	...	...	149
Other premises	...	...	...	6
Verminous articles treated	...	...	...	Nil
Verminous persons cleansed	...	...	...	4

A nominal charge is made for this work.

The occupiers of six premises now retain the services of the rodent operator to make regular visits throughout the year to keep their premises free from rats, mice and insect pests.

Disinfection

14 rooms in 11 houses were disinfected during the year.
Arrangements were made for the disinfection of 8 lots of bedding.

BIRKENHEAD CORPORATION ACT, 1881. Section 90— PIG KEEPING

No new applications for permission to keep pigs were received but 3 persons on the register ceased keeping pigs during the year.

There are now 73 pig-keepers in the Borough, most of whom keep one or two pigs for part of the year only.

BIRKENHEAD CORPORATION ACT, 1930. Section 68— CARAVANS, etc.

One application by a Youth Club to place tents on land during the summer months was granted.

One application to place a caravan on land for living purposes for a period of 4 months was refused.

One caravan was occupied without permission having been sought. After several representations had been made, this van was removed.

THEATRES, MUSIC HALLS AND CINEMAS

60 visits were made during the year. These premises are well conducted and defects speedily remedied by the proprietors.

PHARMACY AND POISONS ACT, 1933

The department is responsible for the issue of licences to persons, other than pharmacists, who sell by retail those poisons set out in Part II of the Poisons List.

New licences issued during the year	...	...	9
Licences renewed during the year	...	...	183
Change of address	...	...	Nil
No. of visits to shops	...	...	40

THE RAG FLOCK AND OTHER FILLING MATERIALS ACT, 1951

In accordance with the provisions of the above Act, the under-mentioned premises have been included in the Statutory Register.

Premises licensed for the manufacture and storage of Rag Flock	...	...	...	1
Premises licensed for the manufacture and storage of layered flock and woolen felting	...	...	...	1
Premises registered for the manufacture of new upholstery	...	...	...	5

11 visits of inspection were made, and the undermentioned samples were submitted to the prescribed analysts for analysis—

		Passed	Failed	Total
Rag Flock	...	5	—	5
Layered Flock	...	1	—	1

Coir Fibre ...	...	...	2	—	2
Curled Fibre ...	...	1	—	—	1
Cotton Felt ...	...	1	—	—	1
Cotton Mill Puffs ...	...	1	—	—	1
Feathers ...	...	1	—	—	1
		—	—	—	—
		12	—	—	12
		—	—	—	—

AIR POLLUTION—BRITISH EMPIRE CANCER CAMPAIGN

The department continued to assist the Cheshire and North Wales Branch Council of the British Empire Cancer Campaign. Weekly samples of the suspended matter in a measured quantity of air are sent for analysis together with daily readings of temperature and barometric pressure.

Cylinders of lead peroxide were also exposed for the monthly measurement of the amount of SO_2 in the atmosphere.

OFFENSIVE TRADES

No applications for the establishment of new trades were received.

Many complaints of offensive effluvium from a fat melting factory were made during the year. Experiments in treating the fumes so as to render them innocuous were still in progress at the end of the year.

THE BIRKENHEAD CORPORATION ACT, 1954

Register of Barbers and Hairdressers

New registrations during the year	...	...	6
Number on register at end of year	...	...	139

FACTORIES ACT, 1937 and 1948

PART I OF THE ACT

1.—INSPECTIONS for the purposes of provision as to health (including inspections made by Public Health Inspectors)

Premises (1)	Number on Register (3)	Number of		
		Inspections (4)	Written Notices (5)	Occupiers prosecuted (6)
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	73	26	4	—
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	479	205	14	—
(iii) Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' premises)	26	30	—	—
TOTAL	578	261	18	—

2.—CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND

Particulars (1)	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted (7)
	Found (3)	Remedied (4)	Referred To H.M. Inspector (5)	By H.M. Inspector (6)	
Want of cleanliness (S.1)	10	6	—	4	—
Overcrowding (S.2)	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature (S.3) ...	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation (S.4)	1	1	—	1	—
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6) ...	—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7)—					
(a) Insufficient	5	5	—	3	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective ...	4	7	—	2	—
(c) Not separate for sexes ...	1	1	—	1	—
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Out-work)	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	21	20	—	11	—

PART VIII OF THE ACT

Nine outworkers engaged in the making, etc., of wearing apparel were included in the list required by Sec. 110 (1) (c). There were no prosecutions under Sections 110 or 111.

MILK SUPPLY

The regular supervision and sampling control of milk has been mainly directed at the pasteurising and bottling plants within the Borough. An appropriate number of samples have also been taken from milk being sold in the Borough, but originating from other areas. As will be seen from the details of the samples given later, the excellent record of the past years has been maintained.

Last year occasion was taken to comment on the difficulties experienced by the wholesale depots in dealing satisfactorily with consignments of milk received, which they find to be below the standards of cleanliness or composition. The position is still undetermined, but in view of the supply being more than adequate to meet the demand, it now seems possible that the depots may be in a position to reject milk which is not of the required standard.

The presence of foreign matter in milk bottles continues to be a source of anxiety to the trade and the department. The response from the public still leaves much to be desired. It seems that this difficulty will remain until it is practicable to use a non-returnable container.

During the year legal proceedings were instituted in respect of three bottles of school milk containing old foil caps, and one bottle containing a leaf. Fines of £3 3s. 0d. in one case and £5 0s. 0d. in the other cases were imposed.

The numbers of registered dairies and dairymen and of licences issued under the Milk (Special Designation) Regulations are:—

No. of registered dairies	...	...	...	45
No. of registered dairymen	...	...	...	194
Dealers Licenses to sell "Pasteurised" Milk	...			156
Dealers Licences to sell "Tuberculin Tested" Milk	...	...	...	90
Dealers Licences to sell "Sterilised" Milk	...			102
Processor's Licences to pasteurise milk	...			2
Number of visits to dairymen's premises	...			112

Bacteriological examination of milk

Samples were submitted with the following results:—

	Passed	Failed	Total
Pasteurised Milk	77	—	77
Tuberculin Tested Milk	64	4	68
Sterilised Milk	50	—	50
	—	—	—
	191	4	195
	—	—	—

The four samples which failed did not pass the methylene blue test. They were processed outside the Borough.

Chemical Analysis of Milk

205 samples of milk were submitted for analysis:—

176 samples were reported as genuine.

17 samples were reported as deficient of fat.

12 samples were reported as deficient of fat and naturally deficient of non-fatty solids.

Of the genuine samples 24 were naturally deficient in non-fatty solids.

All the samples adversely reported upon were taken in the course of delivery to the wholesale dairies.

The 17 samples of milk deficient in fat were from nine farmers. In all cases the fat content of milk in other churns of the same consignments made up for the deficiency so that the bulked milk of each farmer was satisfactory.

The 12 samples deficient in fat and naturally deficient in non-fatty solids were from six farmers. The bulked milk in all cases was satisfactory in fat content, and the bulked milk from four farmers was satisfactory in the amount of non-fatty solids.

The two cases where the bulked milk was naturally deficient in non-fatty solids were referred to the Ministry of Agriculture's Advisory Department in an effort to improve the quality.

ICE CREAM

The high standard of cleanliness and quality set during the previous years has been maintained. Routine inspection and sampling has shown that the Regulations governing the manufacture and handling of ice cream are being fully implemented by the trade, so that ice cream can fairly be regarded as a nutritive and hygienic commodity.

Details of the premises retained on the Statutory Register are as follows:—

Premises registered for the manufacture of Pasteurised Ice Cream	...	...	...	14
Premises registered for the manufacture of Cold Mix Ice Cream	...	...	...	14
Premises registered for the manufacture of Lolly Ices only	...	...	...	10
Premises registered for the sale of Ice Cream and/or Lolly Ices	...	...	...	501
Number of visits paid to premises	...	...	...	116

There are a number of premises included in the above figures from the register, at which the manufacture of ice cream is not very regular or frequent. The tendency of late years has been for retailers to handle supplies from wholesale manufacturers and supplement these if required, during peak periods of consumption, with ice cream of their own manufacture.

50 samples of Ice Cream were submitted for Bacteriological analysis during the year and reported upon as follows:—

Samples of Ice Cream placed in Grade I	...	42
Samples of Ice Cream placed in Grade II	...	8
Samples of Ice Cream placed in Grade III	...	—
Samples of Ice Cream placed in Grade IV	...	—
		50

Bacteriological examination of Other Foods

During the year considerable attention was paid to the state of the raw materials used in the manufacture of meat products. A total of 339 samples of manufacturing meat and offal were submitted to the laboratory. The results were satisfactory.

In previous years the bacterial condition of certain egg albumens and powders used for manufacturing purposes was found to be unsatisfactory, both locally and in other parts of the country. In view of this routine sampling was continued during the present year and it would appear that the position is more satisfactory.

23 samples were submitted to the laboratory and all proved to be free from pathogenic organisms.

School Kitchens

In collaboration with the School Meals Organiser, some tests and investigations were made to check the efficiency of the methods of washing crockery, and utensils, and the use of detergents and sterilizing agents. Samples, mainly of the washing water at various stages of the cleansing processes, were submitted to the laboratory.

FOOD HYGIENE

The Food Hygiene Regulations came into force on the 1st January, 1956, except for those sections requiring structural alterations or provision of new equipment, the operation of which was delayed until the 1st July, 1956. The aim of the regulations is to raise the standard of construction of food premises, to ensure the provision of personal washing facilities, separate and distinct from those provided for the preparation of food or the washing of equipment, the provision of a constant supply of hot and cold water over sinks and wash basins and the conduct and personal cleanliness of food handlers. To minimize the risk of food poisoning, certain infectious conditions of food handlers must be notified immediately, cuts and wounds etc., must be adequately protected, food for immediate consumption must be kept at prescribed temperatures so as to inhibit the growth of food poisoning bacteria.

For the first six months of the year every effort was made to ensure that food handlers knew of the regulations and fully appreciated their effect. Talks were given to two food trade associations and a lecture on hygiene in the catering trade was given to a class of hotel keepers.

Unfortunately the Food Hygiene Inspector's post was vacant for the last six months of the year and the Food and Drugs Inspector's post for four months, with the consequent diminution in work.

The general position is that the larger concerns engaged in food preparation and distribution are fully aware of their responsibilities, and their premises are reasonably satisfactory. Premises where food is prepared and the larger cafes are also satisfactory, but in the smaller cafes, and small retail shops much needs to be done. It is felt that many of the proprietors of these smaller premises, although aware of the requirements of the regulations, do not make much effort to comply with them until an inspector has visited their premises, pointed out the short comings and given a time limit for compliance.

The majority of food traders co-operate well with the department. The only way of ensuring a reasonable hygienic standard, is by frequent visiting by an inspector, who, whilst understanding the difficulties of the trader, can explain the reasons for and the importance of hygiene.

It is hoped that the effects of the work done by the inspectors this year will become evident next year.

The following premises are registered under Section 16 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1955:—

Fish fryers	...	...	...	...	...	94
Butchers manufacturing sausages and cooked meats	...	...	...	...	...	79

Cooked meat manufacturers	...	...	...	12
Pickle manufacturers	...	...	...	1
			TOTAL ...	186

Premises registered under Sections 102 and 103 of the Birkenhead Corporation Act, 1954:—

Food Hawkers and their premises (Sec. 102)	...	13
Vendors of shell fish and their premises (Sec. 103)	...	33
Notification of new food premises (Sec. 101)	...	4

Summary of Inspections and Defects remedied

	Cafes and Canteens	Food Preparing Premises	Licensed Premises	Shops	Totals
No of premises ..	167	182	43	—	—
No. of visits ..	411	227	32	710	1380
<i>Defects remedied:</i>					
Sanitary convenience separated from food store ..	4	2	—	3	9
Walls, floors, ceilings, doors, windows					
(a) repaired ..	11	6	—	8	25
(b) cleansed ..	14	6	4	14	38
Food rooms ventilated	—	1	—	1	2
Accumulation of refuse removed ..	4	—	—	3	7
Cleanliness of persons, utensils, clothing	3	1	—	8	12
Wash basins provided	3	3	—	14	20
Sinks provided or renewed	2	1	—	6	9
Hot and cold water supply provided ..	2	3	—	12	17
Towels, soap, etc., provided	—	1	—	12	13
Protection from contamination of food	3	—	—	5	8
Contravention of local bye-laws ..	2	—	—	—	2
Premises closed ..	—	—	—	1	1
	48	24	4	87	163

Shops Act, 1950

201 visits were made to shops. No notices were served under this Act.

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT, 1955

Analysis of Food (other than milk)

199 samples of various types of food and drugs (in addition to 205 samples of milk previously referred to) were obtained and submitted for analysis by the Public Analyst—Tennyson Harris, Esq., Ph.C., F.P.S., F.R.I.C., whose help and co-operation are gratefully acknowledged.

In eight cases the analyst reported the foods were incorrectly labelled. The manufacturer's attention was drawn to these offences, and the necessary alterations were made.

A sample of iodised table salt was found to be deficient in iodine. This loss occurred after packing. After consultation with the analyst, the manufacturers were advised as to the precautions to be taken to prevent this happening.

A sample of non-brewed condiment was slightly deficient in acetic acid. The manufacturer was cautioned.

Four samples reported against were in connection with complaints received regarding unsound foods.

Unsound Food

The inspection of food in shops, warehouses, canteens, etc., was carried out by all the public health inspectors. All condemned food was collected and disposed of—mainly by tipping on the Corporation tip—under supervision. The following list shows the types and quantities of food dealt with.

Canned and Bottled Goods:—

Meat	...	...	...	1813
Fruit and Vegetables	...	...	5375	
Fish	...	...	320	
Soup	...	...	465	
Milk	...	...	2036	and 616 pints
Preserves	...	...	154	
Puddings	...	...	1445	
Bacon and Ham	...	...	57 $\frac{1}{4}$	lbs.
Butter, Margarine, Cooking				
Fat	...	...	170 $\frac{1}{2}$	lbs.
Cereals	...	...	367	lbs.
Cheese, Cheese spread	...	...	67 $\frac{1}{4}$	lbs.
Chocolate	...	...	8 $\frac{1}{2}$	lbs.
Fish, fish paste	...	...	14 $\frac{1}{2}$	lbs.
Flour confectionery	...	...	470	lbs. and 192 packets
Fruit, vegetables	...	...	200 $\frac{1}{2}$	lbs.
Jellies	...	...	13	packets
Meat, meat products	...	...	870 $\frac{1}{2}$	lbs.
Milk, cream	...	...	111 $\frac{1}{2}$	lbs.

Pickles, sauces	...	...	14 $\frac{1}{4}$ lbs.
Sugar, syrup	...	...	385 lbs.

Tea 1 chest

A large quantity of miscellaneous food was destroyed after fire.

Food Complaints

29 complaints were made regarding food alleged to be unfit for consumption. All were investigated.

The majority of complaints, 19 in number, were in respect of milk supplied to the schools. Fragments of glass were found in four bottles, old foil caps in six bottles, grease spots on the surface of the milk in three cases, miscellaneous foreign matter in five cases and damaged bottles due to rough handling in the remaining case. In at least three cases there was genuine doubt as to where responsibility really lay and no action was possible. All dairymen sending milk to Birkenhead schools were told of these occurrences and warned of the possible consequences.

Four summonses were issued in respect of one bottle of milk containing a leaf and three bottles containing old foil caps. The suppliers in turn issued summonses against the milk processors and bottlers, who were fined £3 3s. 0d. in one case and £5 0s. 0d. in each of the other three cases. The suppliers were dismissed from the cases.

Bread was the commodity giving rise to the next largest number of complaints, six in all. These were in respect of grease marks or charred dough (three cases) and nails or nuts and bolts (three cases) being found in loaves. These were the result of inadequate care or cleaning of the machinery. The manufacturers were cautioned.

Mould on a meat pie and on sausages, animal hair in a meat pie and pre-packed rice containing the head of a foreign bird accounted for the remaining four complaints. The vendors were cautioned in each case.

MEAT INSPECTION

This section of the report details the work carried out by the Veterinary Officer and the staff of Meat Inspectors.

During the year 202,326 animals were slaughtered in the Borough, an increase of 39,163 compared with 1955.

	Cattle	Calves	Sheep	Pigs
1956 ...	82,193	290	112,080	7,763

All animals slaughtered were subject to ante- and post-mortem inspection by the Veterinary Officer and the Meat Inspectors.

Carcases and Offal inspected and condemned in whole or in part.

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs	Horses
Number killed (if known)	*	82193	290	112080	7763	None
Number inspected		82193	290	112080	7763	None
<i>All diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci</i>						
Whole carcases condemned		58	2	89	17	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned		10205	6	12580	485	—
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuber- culosis and cysticerci		12.4	3.0	11.2	6.4	—
<i>Tuberculosis only:</i>						
Whole carcases condemned		127	None	None	6	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned		13118	None	None	86	—
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuber- culosis		15.9	—	—	1.2	—
<i>Cysticercosis</i>						
Carcases of which some part or organ was con- demned		2	None	None	None	—
Carcases submit- ted to treatment by refrigeration		2	None	None	None	—
Generalised and totally condemned		None	None	None	None	—

*Separation figures not available.

In addition, 68 carcases were inspected of cattle dying in the Lairages or in transit.

The weight of meat and offal condemned was 323 tons 8 cwts. 182 tons 9 cwts. of this total were condemned on account of tuberculosis.

Public Health (Meat) Regulations, 1924

The slaughtering of all animals for food is carried out at the Tranmere Abattoir and Woodside Lairages.

Meat is sent all over the country. Slaughtering takes place practically seven days a week and this undoubtedly places a heavy burden on the meat inspection staff. More animals were slaughtered in 1956 than in 1955. No improvement was seen in the number of hours the meat inspection staff had to be on duty.

The quality of the stock slaughtered during the year was superior to that of previous years.

Check inspection of imported meats received in the wholesale depots was carried out throughout the year. As in previous years, bone taint and decomposition were the chief causes of condemnation. 198 visits were paid to depots during the year. 9 cwt. of beef and mutton were found to be unfit for human consumption.

In the course of the year, quite a fair amount of meat from outside sources was received at Tranmere Abattoir, also animals were slaughtered on farms for emergency reasons. All meat was inspected by the meat inspectors in accordance with Memo 3/Meat. Where a certificate of inspection from another Authority accompanied the meat, further inspection was unnecessary.

The standard of cleanliness of the vans engaged in the transport of meat was generally satisfactory. In a few cases, verbal representations concerning minor improvements resulted in quick rectification.

Slaughter of Animals Acts, 1933-1954.—89 renewals of licences and 6 new licences to slaughter animals were granted to butchers and others employed in the Borough.

Diseases of Animals Acts.—Work under the above Acts has involved:—

- (1) The examination of store pigs kept within the Borough to ensure that the animals are free from Swine Fever. 63 visits were paid and 397 pigs were inspected.
- (2) The routine inspection of 21 dairy herds within the Borough.
- (3) Under the Tuberculosis Order, 1939, the supervision of the disinfection of premises following removal of tubercular cattle.
- (4) Visits to Taylor Street Cattle Sidings were made frequently to supervise live animals passing through to see that cruelty is avoided; to prevent, if possible, sick animals from travelling further and to take precautions against suspected anthrax. Blood smears were taken from 7 animals found dead in trucks in the sidings with negative results in all cases.
- (5) Visits to farms in connection with warble fly prevention and treatment.
- (6) Visits to farms in connection with the dipping of sheep.
- (7) Under the Fowl Pest Order, frequent visits are paid to Live Poultry Dealers and Breeders in the Market and elsewhere within the

Borough. There was one contravention concerning movement of chicks involving a fine of £2.

Pet Animals Act, 1951.—15 premises were inspected frequently. There was a careful scrutiny of the meat supplied to the shops for the feeding of the pets.

Export of Meat Products. During the year, the Veterinary Officer issued export licences to Gut-Scraping firms for 385 tierces (42 gallon casks) of beef rounds, middles, etc., and sheep guts, for shipment to most European countries and U.S.A. It was necessary to visit the factories to carry out token inspections of products as to cleanliness and suitability before issuing the accompanying licences. This is a growing and useful industry and ought to be encouraged.

Registration of Premises used for the sale, etc., of Animal Feeding Meat (Birkenhead Corporation Act, 1954, Section 98).—No new applications for registration were received during the year.